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DESIGN

PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF THE DECORATIVE ARTS

FELIX PAYANT, Editor

DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLUMBUS

VOL. 35

NO. 7

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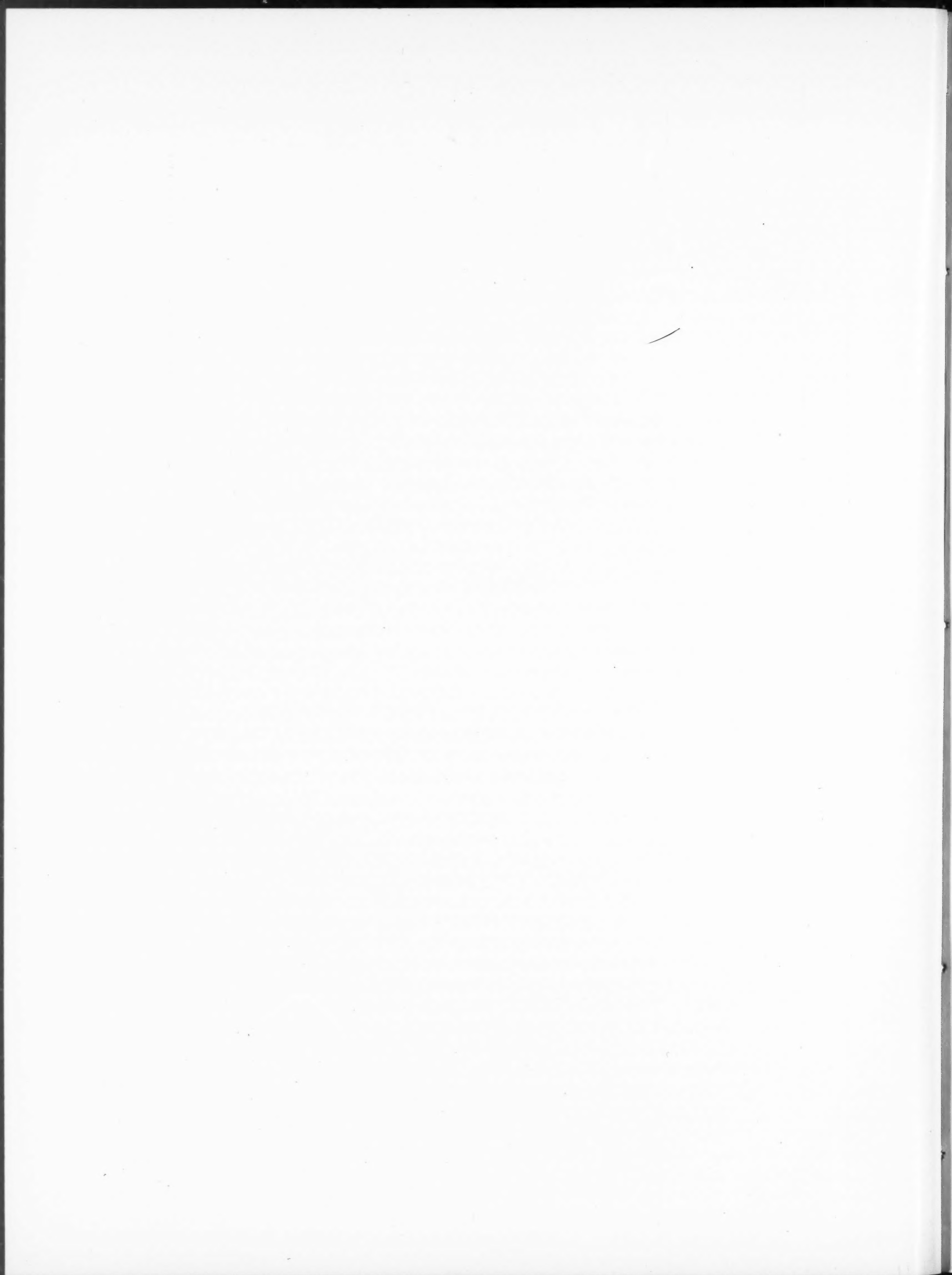
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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

ABOVE all things we wish our readers a well designed year of 1934. For from all sides it would seem that if there is anything missing about our social and economic situation it is design. Experts in all fields are crying for more planning, more order, more rhythm, and more creative thinking. So if philosophers say that what we need is a designed society, and engineers say we need a better designed industrial order, and economists say we must design our price system as well as supply and demand, and the producer finds that design sells his goods, it is high time the educator is awakening to the great value of design as an approach to art understanding and culture. Those engaged in spreading the gospel of design have much responsibility on their shoulders and what an opportunity in educating the youth of America.

IN this number we are printing two rather pertinent articles: one on the importance of art or design to society as a cultural basis which right now is one of the vital points in our social reconstruction and the future development of America and another article stressing the great need in American industry of more design understanding on the part of those who are responsible for quantity production. We believe our readers are not only in accord with the two articles, the first by Donald Torbert, and the second by Carlton Atherton, and that those who are teachers and school administrators will pull with us in achieving not only a better culture in America through art but a better product in our machine-made commodities to add more beauty to our lives as well as high standards for America in the field of industrial art.

MAGAZINES on all sides, which heretofore have devoted their pages to a variety of interests, are with one accord placing greatest emphasis on design in industry—or design for the machine. We believe the word design is scarcely understood by the great mass of people. Art teachers still in many cases feel that the word design means merely ornament and that the designer still "cribs" from one source or another all sorts of motifs and with a little reorganization places them upon some unwilling object. The true significance placed in the word design, however, is much to be recommended. Let us all promote better designers throughout America, more capable creators in terms of our needs, our materials, our machines, and our present day rhythms. What would the automobile industry do if it could not use design in promoting its products? No other factor can compare with design—in its many connotations as to line, color, contour, balance—in making the various new models each year more attractive to those of us who are interested. In fact it seems that that industry has done much to make America line conscious and to bring before the average person the significance of functional design. They have done much, those designers of cars, with the support of persons behind them, to improve public taste. Who can not remember back when the producer of popular low-priced automobiles said he would not give five cents for all the art in America? How times change.

FELIX PAYANT

IN THE WORLD OF CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

AMERICAN FEDERATION BROADCASTS

● An important means of diffusing art knowledge is about to be inaugurated by the American Federation of Arts, in a series of radio talks on the subject. It will be divided into two parts, the first section of the series to cover art in America up to the middle nineteenth century. The second section of the series will be presented from September until mid-winter and will present the subject as developed up to the present time.

A comprehensive booklet will be prepared to make possible for the millions of potential listeners a detailed, illustrated outline for the better study and appreciation of the topics covered. The program will contain resumes of each talk with pictorial additions in black and white and color. Museums and art organizations throughout the country will cooperate. This extremely valuable and important project was initiated by the General Federation of Woman's Clubs and organized by the American Federation of Arts under a grant from Carnegie Corporation, with the help of the council for radio in education, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the Museum of Modern Art, also in Manhattan.

The appointment of a Public Works Art Commission to develop a project to be sponsored by the Federal Government for the re-employment of some 2500 painters, sculptors and craftsmen, is the closest approach to government control of art that this country has yet come to. It indicates a recognition of the importance of state interest in art development in the nation. These many designers will be engaged in the decoration of public buildings. Our statesmen have at last shown their belief in the importance of and the need for a definite program in the evolution of creative art as an important

part of modern American life. Naturally much hurried and perhaps poor work will be turned out in this sudden attempt at a wholesale reconstruction of our art methods, but it is a decided step in the right direction which all European countries have long since followed through with immense success. If it is due to the current depression that this startling and radical step has been taken,—then it is indubitably a fact that artists and designers may give thanks for a seeming disaster which has brought many good results in the way of rebuilding things in the way they should go.

ART IN SIXTEEN CITIES

● The Museum of Modern Art, of New York, announces that its Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture from sixteen American cities was opened to the public December 13. The cities represented are Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Francisco, Santa Fe, and Seattle. Each city has been considered as the center of a section, its quota including the works of artists living in the surrounding district provided they consider the city their artistic center.

The choice of works of art from each of the sixteen cities was made in every case by a local authority, uninfluenced by the Museum of Modern Art. Originally it was intended to publish the names of the representatives who made the selections but it was found that in many cities feeling among artists was so that the judges felt it much wiser to remain anonymous. The paintings from each city will be hung together and will afford unusual opportunity for group comparison. The exhibition as a whole will give New York a view at close

range of the art of the entire country, thus reversing the usual process of sending works of art from New York for display in other cities.

The idea for the Sixteen Cities Exhibition occurred to Edward M. M. Warburg, a trustee of the Museum, when in 1932 he made an extended tour of the United States, visiting museums and studying the artistic life of the country as a whole. Upon his return to New York he suggested holding an exhibition of painting and sculpture drawn from various parts of the country. A. Conger Goodyear, President of the Museum, was enthusiastically in favor of the idea and set in motion plans which culminated last month in the exhibition.

Commenting on the exhibition, Mr. Warburg says: "During recent years New York has assumed a role in the American art world of greater importance, many feel, than its achievement deserves. Most of the currents which flow from Europe to America pass through New York and radiate from there throughout the country. This traffic has been too much a one-way affair. The Museum of Modern Art feels that every effort should be made to restore a more even balance of trade. To do this in a concrete way the Museum has organized the Sixteen Cities Exhibition, so that instead of our sending these cities an exhibition they are sending us one."

In a recent statement, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum, says: "Everyone in touch with American culture outside of New York is aware of a growing sectionalism, a belief that American art and literature can profit by permitting the roots of expression to flourish in native soil rather than transplanting them to a metropolis such as New York, Chi-

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IS THE CREATIVE WORKER A SOCIAL PROBLEM TODAY?

By DONALD TORBERT

In writing of the creative thinker there is great temptation to try again the impossible—give a definition of art. The word has come to have so broad a meaning that no pat phrase of any person, whether painter, architect, philosopher, business executive or student, can have any practical meaning, only in so far as that person limits himself specifically to one field. Art can be attained in any form of endeavor—in the construction of a bridge as in a great painting. The artist is confronted with two things—his problem and his material. From these two elements and his own mind his art must come.

The problem must be limited to the creative worker in the cultural field. That is, to the painter, the architect, the writer, the poet, the dramatist, the musician, the sculptor, and to such possible new art forms as the cinema and photography. In most of these fields the worth of the artistic product is intangible. This art product is concerned with, and possibly is, a sublimation of emotion. Even more important to modern civilization, it is an attainment of beauty through the force of disciplined power. It is the highest form and the tangible result of balanced growth, or, more specifically, the study of controlled relationships. It is the expression of the essential ideas and beliefs of the times.

This essential idea needs interpretation. Contrary to the views of some modern writers who believe that the need for art has passed, it is of constantly increasing importance; for, as our wealth of knowledge increases, so do our lives become increasingly complex. With complexity comes specialization, a narrowing and refining of the individual store of knowledge. This narrowing process has been going on through hundreds of years, but it has been tremendously accelerated during the last century. It is this very condition which makes the artist as important in our age as in any past, for he serves as an interpreter. By his interpretation he increases and accentuates our consciousness of life in its broadest sense. By the clarity of his thought and the depth of his vision and feeling, he gives meaning to life.

In any period of great art in the past the artist has justified his place in society. He has fulfilled a definite need in the life of the times. He has interpreted the essential motivating forces of his period. He made beautiful, according to their functions, the forms of objects and ideas about him. He made tangible and attractive the emotional experiences of his period. The artist was a business man. His studio was a factory. His patrons were the church, the state, and the few great ruling families.

The Industrial Revolution had as great an effect on art as on industry. Previous to the revolution change had been slow; the individual knew only one small section, geographical and political, and as conditions slowly changed he constantly readjusted himself. With the advent of the machine great avenues were opened, pointing to wealth and power. Conditions changed so rapidly that all sense of proportion was lost. All effort was directed toward keeping up with the machine. The revolution was the first grand break with nature; all that had gone before had been man-made, now all was to be machine-made. The machine was condemned on all sides, but it survived all its critics and fulfilled its function—it produced. Its owners and inventors simply turned it loose. The artist was forgotten to a large degree. There seemed no place for him in the rapidly mechanized world and he failed to create a position for himself. He failed to readjust himself to the now rapidly changing conditions; but he was not entirely to blame, for there was little beauty to interpret in the social and industrial set-up of the age. Although meritorious art work was being done all the time, the artist was not a definite part of the social fabric; he had become rather the toy of the newly-rich industrial classes, who had forgotten everything in the exploitation of the machine, and had lost all their taste, their critical and reflective capacity. This class, now with enormous wealth and power, again became the patron of the artist. But neither the patron nor the artist made an honest beginning in the new "revival". Both were still working with pre-industrial ideas. The artists unassimilated by the new era, were fumbling about, lost in a haze of worn-out ideas and old ideals. And their patrons blindly and willingly accepted, even sponsored, ugliness and trashiness in every form. Public taste was at a very low level. Although not all artists and not all patrons lost their senses over this period, it was necessary for the serious worker in the cultural field, lacking independent means of support, either to live in great poverty or to find a sponsor—neither of which was a happy or healthful solution.

It has been said by a modern writer that "to take one's work seriously is to make one's self ridiculous." In no other field is this so true as in the creative cultural field. What brought about this condition? Who is at fault? Obviously the answer is not simple. Yet a few facts are apparent. The artist of the nineteenth century, in general, was not an honest workman. As has been pointed out, he occupied an artificial place in a false cultural system. He was concerned only with the past and the obvious. Eventually his lack of clear thought

and the shallowness of his feeling were discovered. The equally shallow society which had coddled him felt betrayed and lost faith in him. Both were at fault. This same situation has been carried up to the present time. Art is looked upon by the great majority of people as a pastime, certainly nothing to be taken seriously. Public taste, as in the nineteenth century, remains at a very low level. As in the nineteenth century, the self-styled artist continues to paint—landscapes, portraits—most of them only saying what has been better said before. Yet these artists demand that they be taken seriously. The machine and twentieth century methods of production have made possible the production of enormous quantities of goods, yet the designer, and particularly the public, remain tied to the old tradition.

In the field of literary arts the position of the writer in present day America is fully as bad as that of the painter, and the outlook for the future is less encouraging. His position is due almost wholly, it seems, to the low level of public taste. Unlike the painter, he has not held a false position in our scale of values, nor has he had built up around him a false aura of romantic appeal, as had the painter. This distinction in the relative present-day positions may seem far fetched, but art has an appeal for the snob and the pseudo-intellectual which literature lacks. The artist unable to live by the sale of his work can get a sponsor, if the "high-hat" tone is carefully preserved during the string-pulling process. But the writer? To understand a fine piece of literary work true appreciation of the beauty in language and real study are necessary. To understand the best that is being done, background is necessary. An honest piece of art work has an emotional appeal for almost anyone, but a piece of fine writing is absolutely wasted on the person whose interest is exceeded by his lack of taste. People once read that they might learn the truth. Reading was a stimulant and a tonic. Now the average person demands that his reading create an illusion. He wants it to act as a drug.

Architecture as it is carried on today is largely a matter of copying the old and accepted styles. This is particularly bad, as our architecture is probably the closest to our lives of all of the arts. Skyscrapers have been forced on us by the crowded conditions of our great cities. Within the last few years they have emerged in a new form, strong, honest and plain, at least on the exterior. They have been accepted in their best form largely because in any other than simple style they are not only impractical, but ridiculous, while simply done they are striking and dramatic, hence an excellent advertisement. The interiors are often a different story. In the tower of one of New York's great buildings is an entire floor of "artistically" decorated offices, done in the style of the Eighteenth Century French country house. However, much excellent work is being done—more progress has been made in industrial architecture than in any other cultural field. In domestic architecture little progress has

been made as the public simply refuses to build in anything but the accepted styles of the past. Thousands of residences are still built in English Cottage, French Provencal, Colonial, Spanish, and every other outgrown style. In all America there are very few private residences, civic structures done in the style fitted to our mode of life.

In Europe more progress is being made, at least by the architects, although public reaction is about the same as in America. The upheaval in economic life caused by the war forced a practical straightforward style in Europe, for they had to have new buildings and had no money for fancy trimmings. Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the greatest of modern architects, has found little sympathy and very little acceptance in America. Normal Bel Geddes has designed yet not executed a few factories and apartment houses. The skyscraper and modern decoration have, however, caught the imagination of America and may be our first accepted art.

Sculpture in the traditional manner by its very nature is a highly limited field. It was early identified with religion and, sponsored by church or state, was a very important art form. That function seems to have passed. There is little to inspire in the modern state. We do not worship the same things as did early people, yet we are not sure what we worship. Speed and change are the keynotes of the time, yet sculpture of all the art forms is the most complex (hence the slowest in attainment), and the most expensive—if it is to be developed in its traditional sense.

Modern people seem not to be conscious of their need for art. We prefer the obvious to the subtle, surface embellishment to beautiful structure. Art involves effort, and we cannot spare the time. Since we have lost our capacity for reflection, we want to be stimulated and encouraged but are afraid to be released. Out of this chaotic situation a planned social-economic system and a new artist are emerging. The new society will, no doubt, be industrial—but it will be planned and it will be balanced. The new artist will have his feet solidly on the ground. He will be a serious worker. In the reintegration of this artist into our re-cast industrial system lies the solution of the modern aesthetic problem. Under the planned economy all classes will have more leisure than has been possible under older systems. To acquire and maintain the balance for which we are striving and to produce and appreciate a cultural life, we must use this leisure in a constructive rather than, as we do at present, in a destructive way. The mental attitude of a people cannot be revamped in a day, or in many days. The change will probably come slowly, but it can be made. It will, in all probability, be many years before a Social State can produce a lasting culture, but it is now that the foundations for that culture are being laid.

Western writers, in discussing any of the European Social States, have been interested, in the main, in the

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MOTION PICTURES AID ART EDUCATION

By ELIAS KATZ

Among the many new means for the furthering of art appreciation is the cinema which the author has studied particularly in its relation to this problem.

There is no reason why motion picture films should not be widely and effectively used in art courses. The objectives of art education are so flexible, and films are so admirably suited to adequately fulfill them, that it is only a matter of clear thought and intelligent action before this next forward step is made.

Until now progress has been delayed by obstacles which are intrinsically unimportant and must be removed.

First, despite a pronounced commercial, artistic, and educational interest, little information is available on what *has* been accomplished thus far with films in art study, and none at all on the wonderfully rich *potentialities*.

Secondly, the absence of a centralized organization which will make accessible the best films, and will actively encourage their use, is halting the necessary investigation and experiment. Finally, the funds required to proceed, however small the amount, and however certain it is to be many times repaid, have not been forthcoming from those sources ultimately to benefit the most.

The following paragraphs, partly to orient the general reader, and partly to meet a growing professional demand for concrete, practical suggestions, will present a survey, attempt an analysis, and will make such proposals as will best aid those interested in overcoming the above-mentioned obstructions to a proper solution of the whole problem. To this end, the worthy but limited uses to which films have already been put in art courses will be described other possible uses deriving from the motion picture as an art form, and from the major educational objectives, will be pointed out, and to conclude, the immediate needs in the field of art educational films will be formulated.

This method of presentation will have accomplished its aim if the attention of thinking individuals becomes focussed on problems destined to have profound repercussions in art education, and eventually, in all contemporary arts.

At least three types of motion pictures have been prepared for art use, the Models in Motion, the Metropolitan Museum of Art educational film library, and films for teaching principles of space composition.¹

The Models in Motion are a method for stimulating

¹ In discussing these efforts, accurate descriptions seem preferable to critical evaluations. The latter will come with the future.

drawing. Briefly stated, in each quarter-reel, a model repeatedly performs the round of some characteristic action, the episodes having been chosen for simplicity and grace. Depending on the individual instructor, the students make sketches of the action while the film is moving, when the picture is stopped or from memory directly afterwards.

Many drawings are made in this way, and after corrections and criticisms (in which the class often participates) the pupil is equipped to make a better drawing through a clearer consciousness of the movement.²

A second source for educational films is the Metropolitan Museum of Art film library. The pictures thus far produced fall into several categories: Travel, historical, biographical, process, and masterpieces of art films.

Travel films, like "Digging Into the Past", bear the spectator to places where art is or was produced; Historical films, such as "Vasantasena", a charming idyll of X Century India, produced by the students at Pratt Institute, orient the student in the artistic background of the past, and stimulate further historical study; while masterpieces of art films occur when desirable attention is drawn to forms and qualities deemed worthy of close examination.

The biographical film theoretically should give an insight into the environment of the creative artist, showing its influence on the character of his finished product. It is to be regretted that no films of this ideal type have been made. In "Childe Hassam," for example, an attempt is made, by showing the noted painter at work and at play, to indicate that love for the outdoors has largely determined his choice of subject. This fact is not at all convincingly demonstrated, nor does the inclusion of many still pictures of Hassam's paintings in the present state of color photography render the treatment any the more satisfactory. The biographical film offers rich potentialities, as yet unrealized.

The final group, process films, are perhaps the most frequent among art educational films, since, by definition, all observable manifestations of the creative manipulation of materials are included. Until now such films have been merely a camera man's record of activities pursued—informative, but hardly artistic

² The Models in Motion were originated by Elizabeth W. Perkins and Charles Woodbury of Boston, and are produced and distributed by Eastman Teaching Films, Rochester, New York. A report on a similar use of films appears in *Bulletin de l'Institut Psychologique*, by M. Adrien Bruneau, at that time teacher in l'Ecole Nationale des Arts Decoratifs (1920-21). Recent correspondence with M. Bruneau reveals that the cinema is rapidly assuming great importance in the art schools of France.

or inspirational. For example, in the "Making of Wrought Iron", an artist in this medium goes through the various steps from preliminary sketch to completed grille. The process is clearly shown, but little or no insight is given into many other factors involved in so simple a process: problems of malleability, eventual use of the completed work, the artist's creative urge, and the structural design. Dramatization of such forces may produce epics rivalling any present notion of what films can portray.

A third use of films has been the recent experiments of Charles Woodbury at the Chicago Art Institute in teaching principles of space composition with films of water phenomena. His belief is that the motion of water under various conditions provides "... a convincing demonstration of the action of force on matter with the resulting form. . . ." Furthermore, characteristic shapes and masses are to be interpreted as representations of the forces which brought them into being.

The validity of this fundamental concept of energy transformation in terms of water cannot be denied, nor the possibility of its practical application in the art class. However, our environment is so throbbing with countless visible instances of energy in motion, that to limit the extent of illustrative material to water may hamper a true understanding of the grand conception of an ever-growing and changing world. Still, this searching forward is a most encouraging sign, and one filled with promise. Indeed, it goes far beyond the present discussion, in a subtle hint at the revolution now taking place in our comprehension of the meaning of art itself—a subject of significance in its own right, and to be more fully treated elsewhere.

Passing from the Models in Motion, Woodbury's experiments, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art film library, which represent what *has* been done with films, we turn to intriguing and highly remunerative speculation on what *can* be done.

The teaching of art is stressed differently at successive levels in the educational system. In elementary grades, the emphasis is on construction projects, painting, drawing, and picture study; in secondary schools, there are art appreciation classes for all students, with special electives for the talented; and in universities, art courses fall into History, Appreciation, and Practice of Art. For convenience alone the college method of analysis will be followed.

The study of history aims to interpret the present in the light of known facts about the past. Accordingly, the best films for teaching the history of the visual and space arts, where subject matter has largely to do with individuals, techniques, and influences, will be those presenting vivid and accurate historical or factual information.

Thus, films like "Vasantasena," or the "Spectre",

¹ In a letter dated February, 1933.

(a Colonial fantasy) might well serve as orientation in the art of their respective periods, while "Digging Into the Past" conveys some notion of the scope and importance of the Egyptian archaeological investigations. In this connection, excellent material may be found in selected portions from theatrical productions like "King of Kings", "Joan of Arc", "Intolerance", "Hunchback of Notre Dame", etc. Painstakingly accurate historical backgrounds are coupled with brilliant acting in these memorable entertainment films.

In art appreciation, the problem is far more complex, because of uncertainty and disagreement over what constitutes appreciation and how it is to be taught. Setting aside philosophical speculations, objectives for appreciation courses may be more or less delineated. These are *to furnish rich visual experiences, and to encourage the habit of thoughtful selection.* The first aims to establish the general background resulting from first hand contacts, the second, to develop a greater sensitivity to the materials and qualities which enter into our comprehension of a thing of beauty. Both are interdependent, in that they strive for a common goal—the harmoniously developed individual.

The cinema is the only medium known to man capable of recording, retaining, and reproducing visual motion. This fundamental fact is partial justification for the belief that motion pictures are pre-eminently the medium to satisfy the two basic objectives above stated. For, on the one hand, the film stands ready *to observe and record* the mysteries of nature and men, while on the other, it can *isolate and interpret* any particular manifestation of either. Potentialities like these, deriving directly from the essence of the film as an art form open up vistas undreamed.

For examples of unique visual experiences, we shall take plant growth and abstract design films. In the former, time-lapse photography reveals the plant to be a struggling entity deeply affected by the same influences as humans.

Indeed, the drama of development from fertilization through maturity is the equal of any theater's and no human actor or dancer can ever hope to attain the grace and power expressed by growing leaves and flowers. In abstract films, the creative imagination of the artist is free to flow where he desires. Lines, planes, and shapes are his to manipulate and rhythmically interweave as intuition permits or preconceived pattern dictates. Such experimental films as "Diagonalsinfonie" by Viking Eggeling, and "Rhythmus" by Hans Richter, point to untold possibilities in the field of creative kinetic design.

Examples of films which have succeeded in isolating specific factors involved in a work of art (thereby aiding critical selection of such elements) are rare. However, as already stated, there is no reason why the artist's struggles with materials, the needs of the

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PERUVIAN ART AND THE CREATIVE SPIRIT

By GILBERT S. COOPER

So often, in our teaching of design, we overlook the possibilities of incorporating into our program the study of early peoples and the type of design which they have handed down to us. In so doing, we lose a great opportunity to enrich the minds of our students, to provide them with the means of a greater appreciation for design as it existed before our times, and as they are now used by textile manufacturers. A student may study the history of ancient design in the same way that he or she would study the history of a country. Another way, and undoubtedly more effective, is to make it a class problem as one would in studying the essentials of modern design, encouraging as much freedom in creative form as the characteristics of a particular type will permit. This problem deals with this primitive art of the Peruvians. It is an experiment with the creative ability of children of junior high school age, along the lines of recognized culture training. It consists of two separate lessons: the study of Peruvian Art, its motifs and characteristics, and the creation of designs, showing Peruvian influences, by the children.

The presentation of the first lesson is as follows:

We are about to study a type of design so important, that manufacturers send their artists to the museums for the express purpose of noting the figures and color schemes employed so that they may in turn apply these forms of decoration to their own textiles. The type of design of which I now speak is that of the prehistoric Peruvians. In studying Peruvian Art, the artist has found that certain lines are used to express their forms. These forms are derived from certain motifs and represented in a manner which he finds to be characteristic of the Peruvians.

Let us first consider the lines used by these prehistoric people. Upon careful study, we find that the straight line prevails although its arrangement may vary to show a zigzag or step movement. Even these two movements vary to gain other effects. Curved lines are also used either as a circle, half-circle, or an arch.

Next let us turn to the motifs from which Peruvian forms were derived and how the lines we have discovered were used in expressing these forms. Our investigation will show us that four motifs continually occur in Peruvian decoration: the human figure, the bird, the fish, and the puma. The fish motif appears most frequently. This may be due to the fact that the sea was worshiped as one of the Peruvian gods, and the fish used because it is the natural emblem of the sea.

There are characteristic features shown in the drawing of each of these forms. We should first understand that each motif loses its natural appearance and

In this article and the reproduction following, the author shows how such rich sources of art expression as to primitive Peruvian art may be used to enforce the design sense of the student of art. These illustrations were made by pupils of Mr. Gilbert S. Cooper, supervisor of art, Coatsville, Pa.

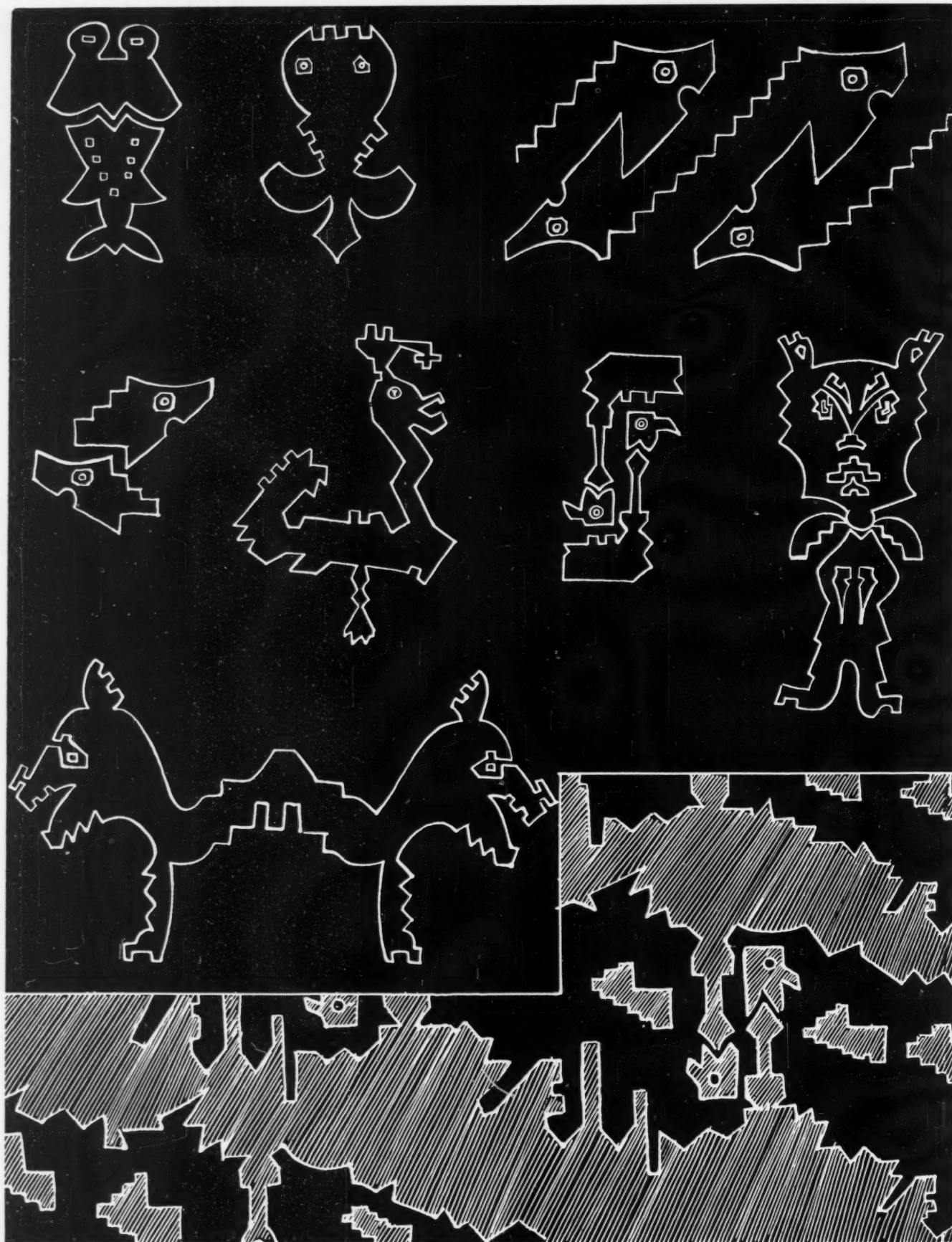
becomes conventionalized. When drawing the fish, the Peruvians show it as if seen from above as may be seen on page 8. Another feature common to the art of these people is their method of interlocking forms. This is accomplished in the fish motif largely by having one side of the design in straight lines and the other in zigzag.

In the typical bird motif, the head and neck are fairly realistic. Again the straight and zigzag lines are used in the body. For the purpose of making a rectangular bird design, these artists used an exaggerated topknot which tends to balance the design and cover space. When interlocking bird forms, we discover that the upper bird faces to the right and the lower bird faces to the left.

Let us now proceed to the puma as shown on page —. From this figure we get many other conventionalized cat forms. Characteristic of this animal we find the humped back and tail. As the puma motif becomes more highly conventionalized, these features may disappear. The Peruvians also had a fondness for combining a number of animal heads in a design showing two cats having the humped back in common. One figure shows the three motifs, cat, bird and fish. Three figures show characteristic human figures highly conventionalized. Peruvian mythological figures usually show part man and part bird, part man and part fish, part man and part cat.

The second part of the lesson is given over to the creating of original designs showing Peruvian influence. In it the student is unrestricted in his scope of ideas. The results may be gathered from the plates showing student work.

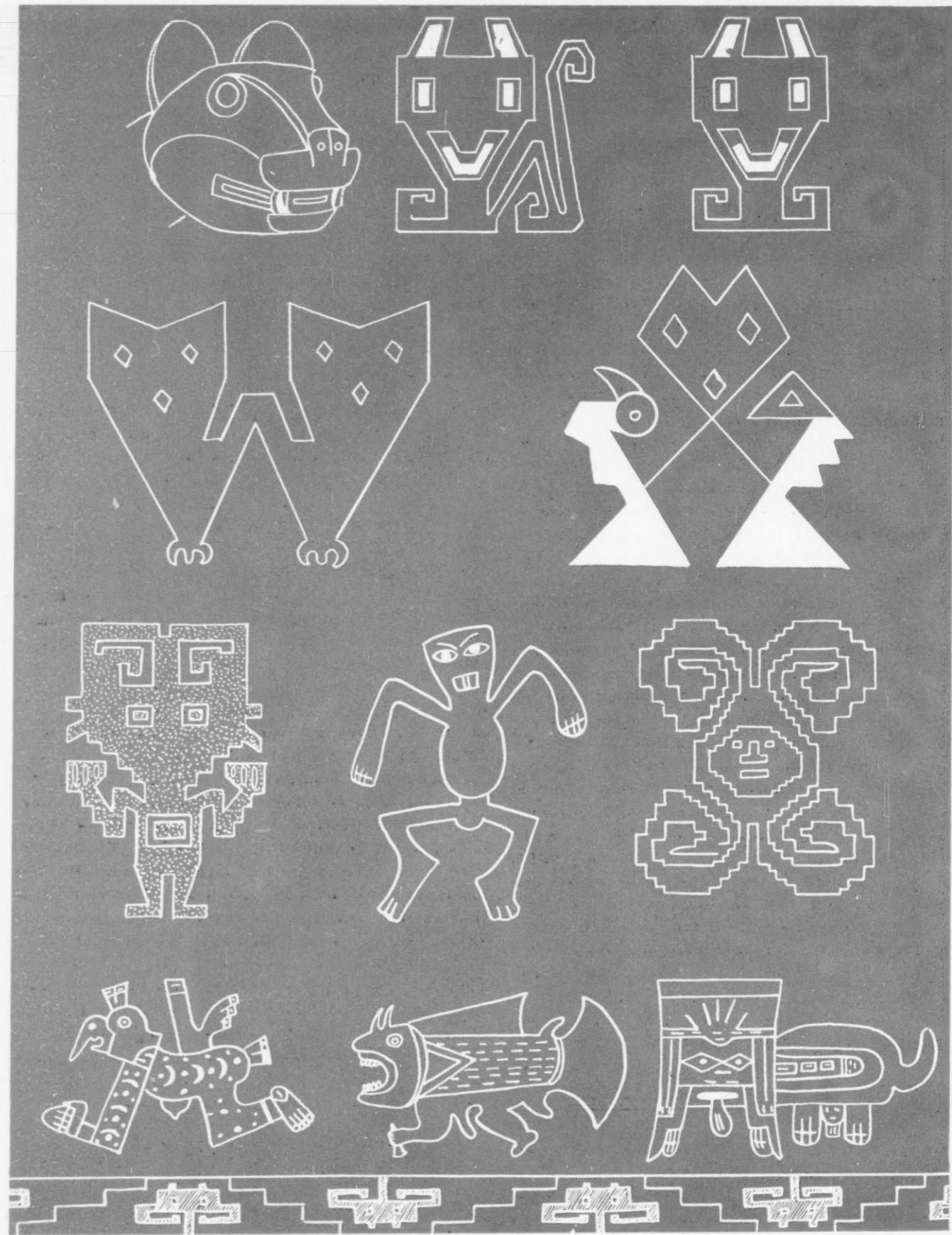
The content material for presentation of the first part of the lesson, also illustrative material was gathered from such sources as *Peruvian Art* by Charles W. Mead, and *Guide Leaflet Series No. 46* of the American Museum of Natural History.



PERUVIAN MOTIFS

The all-over design at the bottom of the page was made from some of the units studied by two pupils of Mr. Cooper.

DESIGN



The border shown at the bottom of the page was built from the prints studied by the pupils of the Coatesville, Pa., High School.

PERUVIAN MOTIFS.

DESIGN

CONTEMPORARY DESIGN AND THE PROBLEM OF THE CERAMIC SHOP

By CARLTON ATHERTON

From primeval days when men first began to produce beautiful articles of utility down to the closing decades of the eighteenth century, the hand furnished the power and guided the tool that fashioned the thing to be produced. This period was so long that it is a significant section of time. But with the invention of the steam engine and electric motor a world-transforming influence began to operate. The motive forces of nature were destined to take the place of hand power, the machine tool to displace the hand tool, and the craftsman's shop to disappear in the factory. "The element of fine design was submerged in learning the manipulation of this super tool. This element of quality was further bound up with many cruder ones of insistent routine. These are described as market, supply and demand, fashion or vogue, merchandising, advertising, all of which are active agents of tremendous power. In the intricacies of making and selling in which all of these are factors, the art factor has often gone astray, been lost out of the mixture, or willfully neglected. The machine and factory organization have been blamed by moralists and critics. There must be a monster to be censured. Whatever the concepts machine, machine-age, or mechanistic may stand for in most minds, we can be certain of one thing." And that thing is that they imply nothing that is not also present in fact or in principle in an ordinary lathe, a simple furnace, a kick-wheel. These are all tools. So also is every complexity of wheels, cogs, etc., that may be called a jigger, a mechanical press, or tunnel kiln. As each grows more complex it may get larger, work faster, produce more, but it does not of itself make either better or inferior goods unless the design is geared that way. To use a machine, itself a fine thing, with skill and understanding is a matter of character. To produce a poor design with such a tool means stultification of the entire process, from creation to sale, and damns use before it is begun.

Many people decry the loss of personal craftsmanship and condemn that which is machine-made. They assert that the object has lost all that is individual. To a certain extent the craftsman's work was partly personal and individual, as when he carved or painted original decorative pattern on a single article of utility; but when he became a manufacturer producing many products from a single design, he did exactly what the machine does now, only more slowly and with

less exactness. Some may assert that this very inexactness was an artistic merit in that it varied with each thing made and, therefore, marked each product with individuality; but to accept this would be to base artistic excellence on imperfection. This would be a hazardous doctrine.

The machine offers skillful and rapid technique. What is technique? It is simply a manner of working, a means to an end; not the end in itself. The use to which this technique should be put is a matter of intelligence, vision, and character. Almost unbelievably tawdry ceramic products are to be seen in department stores and shops everywhere to the practical exclusion of anything of good design. Who or what is responsible? The manufacturer and merchant are still obsessed to some degree by the idea that nothing can be beautiful that is not ornate, although there are evidences all about us that the public in general desires better products than are now provided. Hence, the manufacturer who feels that he must sell though the artistic heavens fall, persists in doing what his machines have never been able to do well, that is, to produce intricate and over-elaborate decorations. What is needed most is fuller art education of the public, a knowledge of design, supplemented by enlightened conscience in manufacturer and seller. The manufacturer is also the victim of a misconception. He thinks the designer is an "arty" person—a chimera with long hair and a flowing tie. Contrary to this, the contemporary designer is an intelligent person and just as business-like as any other man. He can talk to the manufacturer in his own terms—practicability, cost of production and salability. It is true, unfortunately, that there are very few leading designers, but there are very few real leaders in any field. Nevertheless, in America and elsewhere, there have never been more capable designers available than at present.

The manufacturer's viewpoint regarding his product is not well rounded. The pride he exhibits in the technical perfection of his ware is truly gratifying. But why does he stop here? He has produced an admirable working body material, a veritable feat of technical engineering. This wonderful body cries out for a soul and the breath of life. And life in this sense is a relationship to the daily rhythm in which we move. To create works in the tempo of the new spirit means

to break with the sentimental conventions of the last century and return to sound principles. Clay demands forms and treatment consistent with its inherent nature. To distort, to mutilate, or to disguise the innate essence of a medium in a vain effort to make it conform to conventions of the past, to superimpose upon it some preconceived style, is the very denial of honest judgment. No longer can we turn back. The world does not reverse its movement in art any more than in industry.

Art has been called a mirror of the passing world, reflecting the spirit of the time in which it was produced. If so, what reflection are we making in ceramics? Most industries have revolutionized their products in the last few years, bringing them into step with the new tempo of life. This new tempo is surging forward with an irresistible force and those who would be as powerless to stop it as they are the sun in its course. We are a virile people, throbbing with life. We want design with stamina. It is as vital to us as it is to the quality of enduring worth in the ware.

This type of design might be called "modern", though "contemporary" would probably be better. This is not a synonym for "eccentric", nor yet "modernistic." It is the logical and necessary outcome of the new spirit manifest in every phase of our lives. This spirit finds expression in the skyscraper, the automobile, and the airplane. Speed, compression, directness—these are its attributes. Freedom, honesty, freshness—these are its fruits.

The public is becoming more and more design conscious through such fine examples as the automobile. It is interesting to note in this connection that Henry Ford who had expressed the utmost contempt for art, was forced by "consumer demand to become aware of the existence of public taste." Advertisements in some cases are becoming almost masterpieces of art. Packaging constantly brings fine design to public notice. The new beauty of the printed page is to be seen in all the good magazines. An excursion through a department store is becoming an adventure. There are wonderful new textiles in which not only the beauty of pattern and color is present but thought has also been given to the sensuous appeal of texture. The changes that have taken place in such practical things as refrigerators, sinks, stoves, clocks and multitudinous other objects of household utility are more than gratifying. They are magnificent. New forms and combinations of color, greater simplicity and better taste, are all reflected in the multitude of objects undergoing the operation of design or re-design. It seems a sad state of affairs when such things as gas stoves and washing machines are more beautiful to look at and consider than the china service which we are forced to put upon the table yet this is just what happened. The reason for this is obvious. The stoves and washing machines are designed by such master designers as Norman Bel Geddes, Joseph Sinel, and Henry Dreyfuss. These men

and others are constantly at work exploring the possibilities of not one but many media, discovering what each will do best, most easily and in the most logical manner.

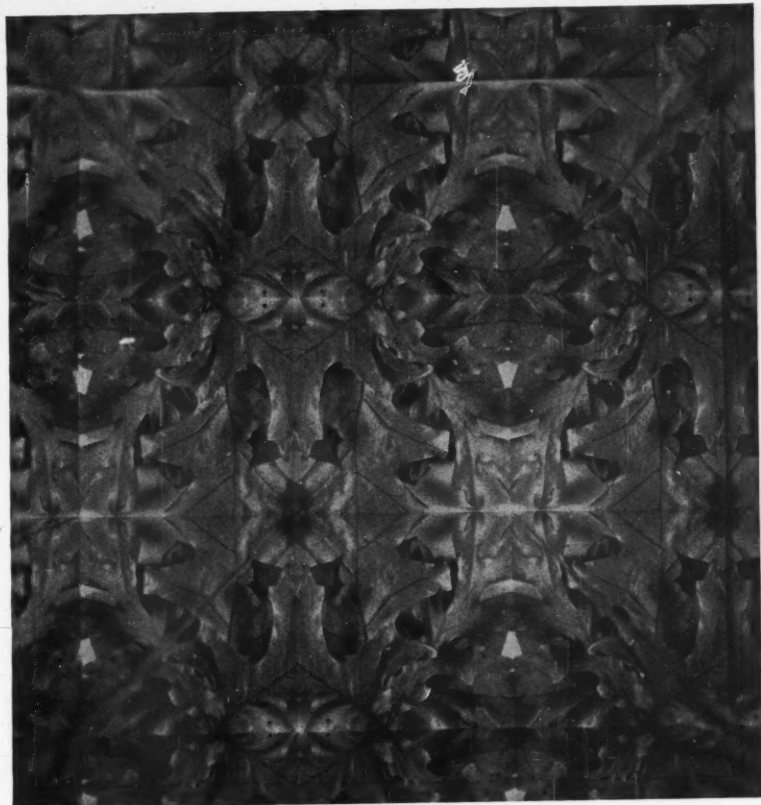
What happens in the ceramic shop? A so-called designer—if the manufacturer deems it necessary to have one at all—a man from some European country, usually, totally unaware of the American pattern of life, combines motifs of decadent European styles with smatterings of the American china-painting period into what to him is a magnificent scheme. He is a poor deluded thing and is to be pitied.

This decoration is then passed to the engraver who doesn't care for it in all of its details and proceeds to alter it. If he has a weakness for ships or ruins, he adds a few, probably giving a convincing reason to the man in charge, who doesn't know anything about that "art-stuff" but is fascinated by the engraver's skill and looks upon him with the same perplexed admiration the small child bestows upon the vaudeville magician. The ware, finally, after many alterations, arrives on the market, with the probable acquisition of a rabbit or two added to satisfy the creative desire of someone else. This, of course, is exaggerated, but with a few notable exceptions, gives an idea of what obtains in the average American ceramic plant, and it is no wonder that nondescript wares are in abundance. It is nothing short of divine intervention which gives us as good as we get—and certainly leaves no doubt as to why the washing machine would be a more pleasant acquisition than a new set of dishes.

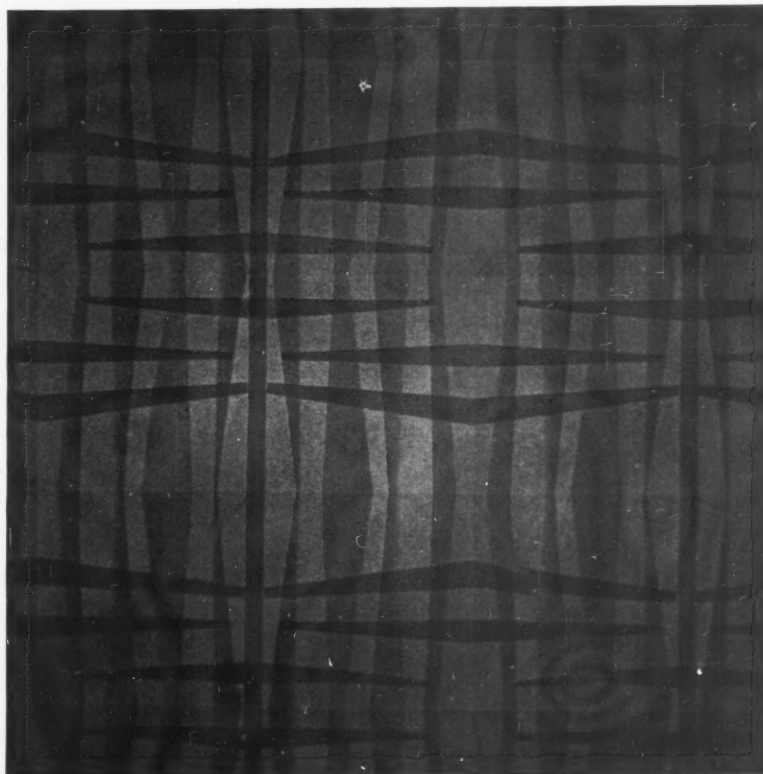
What is needed in the ceramic shop is a real designer, a ceramic artist. He is a man who is able to visualize finished, attractive, and salable products; a man who has technical and artistic knowledge to carry his vision from raw material into concrete form. His conception includes not only superficial decoration but (1) quality of body and glaze necessary to meet specific uses, (2) basic form which will most simply and beautifully fulfill its purpose and at the same time be capable of easy production by practical methods and (3) surface ornament, if any.

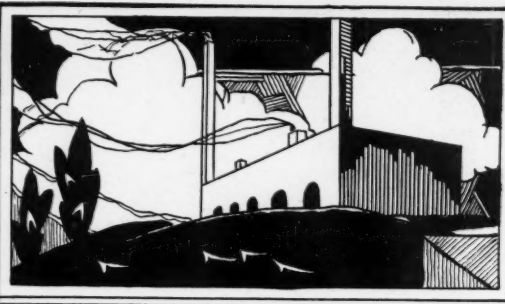
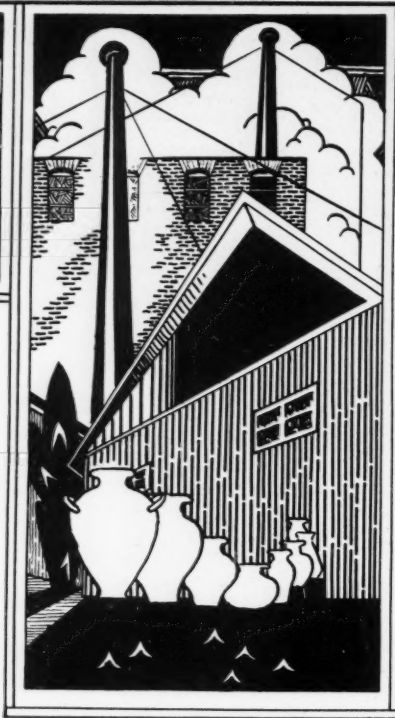
Another necessity in the ceramic industry is wider education of the salesman. Not infrequently is the success of a good type of ware or decoration sent on the road ruined by the personal taste of the salesman, who will not risk the loss of a sale by advancing the untried, but sings the praises of the old to the detriment of the new, thus poisoning the buyer's mind. This has actually happened more than once. As competition grows keener, more and better brains must be devoted to this problem. This industry needs art engineers as well as technical and plant engineers. The amount of effort and talent and money which accompanies the task of putting beauty into a product is enormous. But that it is worth the exertion in the ceramic shop is evidenced by its success in other industries.

TWO ALL-OVER DESIGNS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



In recent years our means of expression has so multiplied that there are countless new avenues to the matter of creating designs. One of these is the camera which has recently been employed by textile designers and others in creating all over designs. In the two illustrations on this page such common units as leaves were used in creating these patterns.





This group of mural decorations by Karl Martz was made to fit in a Ceramic library and uses appropriately enough as motifs kilns and buildings associated with that field of activity.

MURALS MODERN AND THEIR POSSIBILITIES IN CLASS WORK

By FELIX PAYANT

To encourage directness of attack with classes in design it is well to work large. Starting with a large area and a large design rather than small does something by way of release and courage which can not be had by working from small sketches and plans which are rather well worked out in a small scale, then enlarged later.

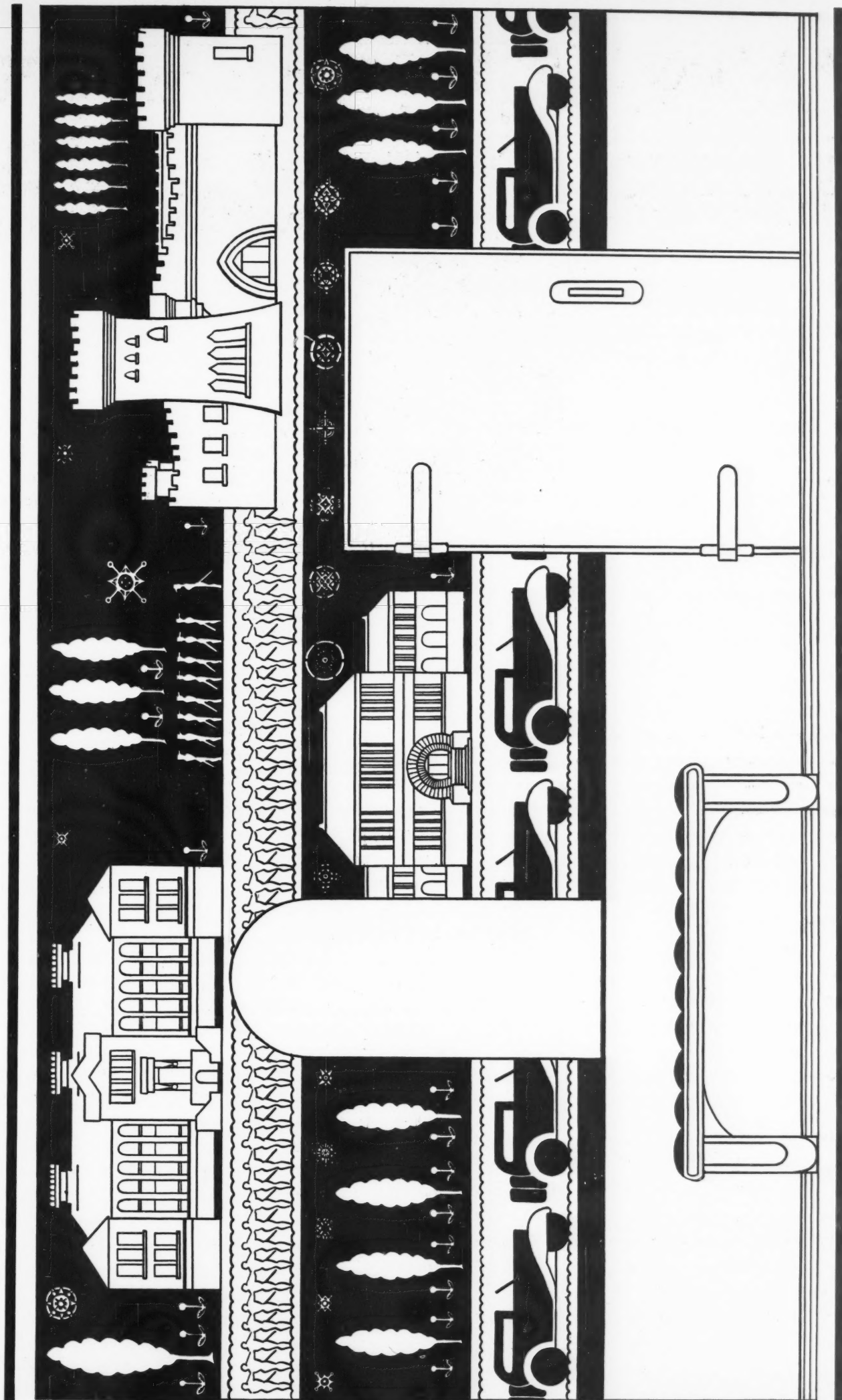
In the case of these murals shown here, the one by Karl Martz and the other by Emily Farnham, which were made in the design class of Ohio State University, the problem was to make a wall decoration from the rather severe subject matter offered by the buildings of the campus. At least to start with that material and develop it as far as was necessary to arrive at a consistent pattern at the end.

The first step was to spend a class period or two making drawings of the various buildings. These were done with charcoal and in outline only. Later these were used as the beginnings with which the full sized murals were made on large sheets of white paper tacked on the wall to fill certain given areas. Besides the buildings many other details were added as they were needed to make the transition. The details used

were tree forms, shrubbery, smoke stacks, automobiles or the rhythmic human figures in military formation. All of this was to be organized or assembled on the large spaces in some such pleasing pattern as to allow those familiar with the buildings and situation to recognize them without difficult.

In Miss Farnham's design the buildings of the oval were used along with the use of cars parked there, and the students drilling. Mr. Martz tackled the severe qualities of the kiln shed along with parts of other buildings which gradually developed into three panels, including other motifs to round out the idea of a pottery ensemble.

These murals when finished in charcoal on the heavy white paper were so handled as to allow for solid black areas with white ones outlined in a decorative line as well as intermediate areas in various decorative line effects. As shown here in the illustrations, these designs were reproduced in pen and ink as a further study of technic and decorative handling. Students find much stimulation in working on large wall spaces directly and later reducing the design to a smaller size. There is nothing equal to large free designing to bring out the creative abilities and powers.



A MODERN UNIVERSITY MURAL
By EMILY FARNHAM

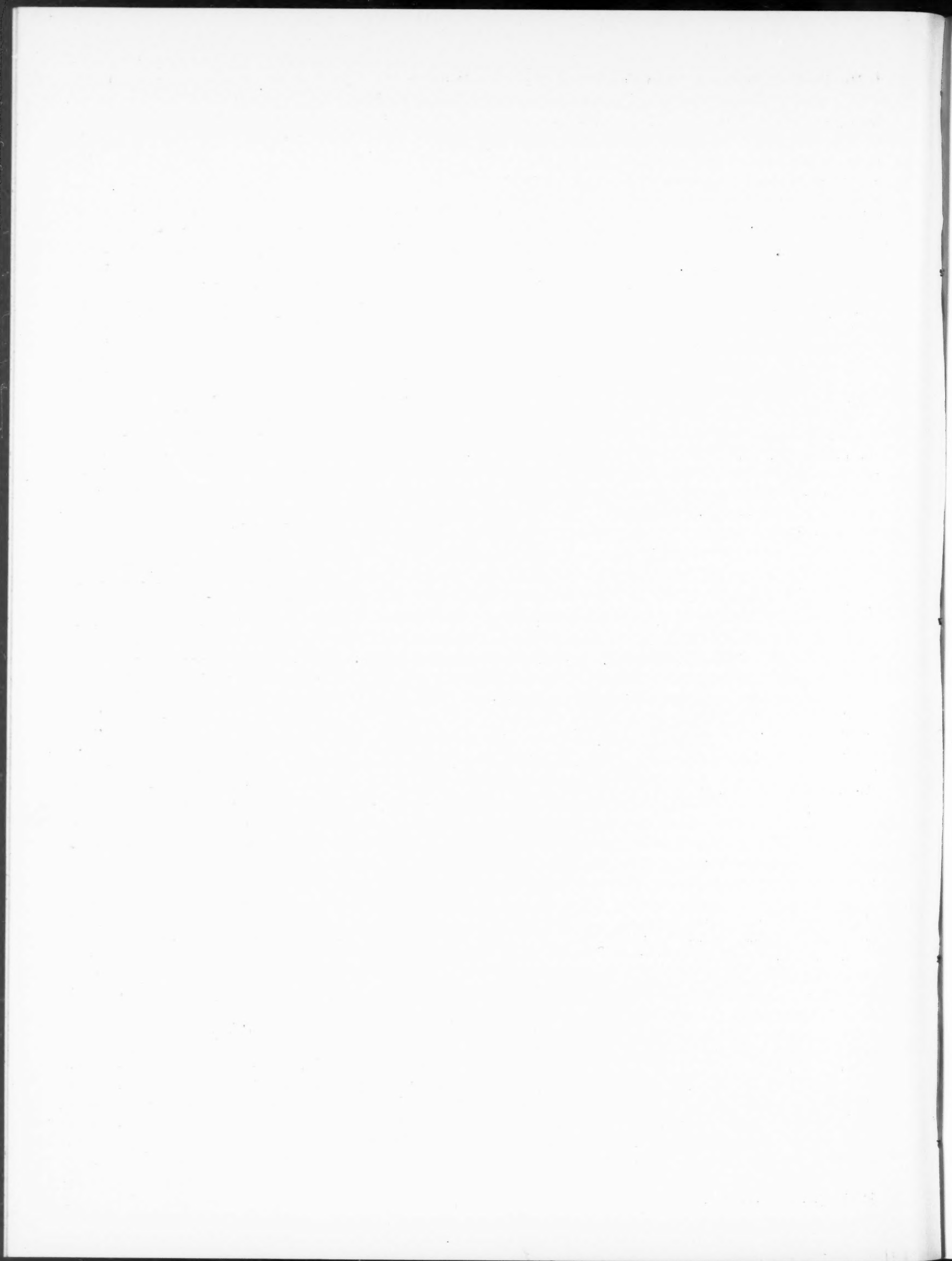
DESIGN



TREE RHYTHMS

By HARRIETT WILSON

A study of a variety of American trees was made for the purpose of analyzing the design possibilities. Each seemed to offer a decidedly different decorative effect and much material for the designer was found.



Is the Creative Worker a Social Problem Today?

Continued from page 4

economic aspects of the new system, since the importance of that phase of the subject is nearest us at the present time. When and if the new social order does give rise to a great culture, many things now so emphasized will have disappeared, such as restrictions on the intellectual or emotional expression of the individual. In any country where an externally passive social revolution is accomplished, the political organization is so complex and so vast that it is impossible for anyone to pass simple judgment on the system, or to generalize on any phase of it; yet it can be said that in no field does the system offer greater opportunity for constructive change than in the cultural field. It is most important that we remember that in its ideal state the planned economy is a formative and upbuilding power which plans as much for the mental health of its people as for their economic well-being.

Since this ideal time appears to lie so far in the future, it is only possible to cite opportunities which the planned society, assuming its ultimate success, will offer for the better assimilation of the creative worker than does the economically unplanned society. The first generation of a new class that comes into power can scarcely fail to be more crude and raw culturally—to lack the reflective and analytic capacity of those under an older culture which was not so narrowly specialized.

The Russians are working toward the upbuilding of a true cultural system in a logical, planned way. Contrary to popular belief, censorship must keep its hands off recognized classics. Some prominent figures in Soviet cultural life take a sympathetic and tolerantly intelligent attitude toward work of non-communist artists. Russians do realize that art is likely to lose vitality if compressed within dogmatic limits. The new Russian education is vocational and utilitarian. The new methods offer the widest scope for experimentation. More latitude is permitted in the purely cultural fields than in politics and economics. Here, many people are suffering under the impression that the old cultural system has been abolished and such is not the case. The Soviet museums are among the finest in the world. They are in close touch with, in fact are a part of, the new school system. And more, they are working museums, that is, laboratories of Design, and in connection with them are workshops where every kind of activity is carried on by students of all ages.

In this new educational system lies the Russian hope for a cultural society. The students are placed in the schools at a very early age. They are given opportunity to develop in all fields. A student showing promise in any particular field is given every opportunity, and all possible encouragement, to develop in that field. The student whose work and interests indicate a particular capacity in a cultural field of work will have this interest fostered and developed to the highest extent. One of the theories on which the new educa-

tional system is based is that each worker must understand the place in society of each class of workers. Made aware of the need of something other than a mere material existence and in constant contact with work of a cultural nature throughout his school life, the person naturally has both interest and sympathy for each class of workers.

Since the value of cultural work is largely intangible, the workers in this field, as in the industrial fields, will have a wage apportioned by the central communistic organization. Since all these workers are considered worth supporting, they will probably be supported at the same level. The artist is little interested in his completed work, it is in the creation that his interest lies. His work, therefore, will be the property of the state, or rather of the people, which is as it should be. Profit will be eliminated in this as in all other fields. This will be of extreme importance in determining the artistic worth of work produced. There can be no exploitation of a susceptible but indiscriminating public for profit motives. Any worker may, if he so chooses, spend his leisure time in the creation of what he may consider an artistic product. This also is as it should be, for "at all times and in all people there is never absent an obscure, distorted, and frustrated aspiration toward the creation of the beautiful". When a fine thing is produced the people see it—on every hand and in every field they are constantly exposed to the best that is being done in the field.

The Russian theatre is maintained by the government, for the people. Many interesting things are already being accomplished in the Russian cinema. In line with the teachings of the government the new motion pictures show a subordination of the individual to the mass. The productions are built around ideas. Therein lies the reason for all the art of the past;—belief in an idea. Once the people believed in the church and supported the religious art. This group belief is necessary for the popular support of any art. The idea around which an art is created does not make the work superior or inferior, but if the idea is one vital to the mass of the people, the people will respond. The idea may have no basis in truth but if the good artist sincerely believes in it, his art will be good. This is the advantage offered by a planned economy—the public will support a public ideal. Most artists now have a personal emotional ideal which they paint. They regret that the people cannot appreciate this highly individualized attitude. Again, what we lack is a group ideal. Communistic literature is crude and raw in general, but it has a very definite place in their crude and raw system. It is realistic and naturalistic, but it is concerned with life and the laws of life, as is all great art. It is bound to develop. It would seem that little more than that can be said of culture as an existing force in the Russia of today. Little is written or said about it, but the people have an ideal. The new system offers a base for the development of a culture of the people.

Continued on page 22

World of Contemporary Design

Continued from page 2

cago, or Paris. The manifesto: 'I Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition,' published by a group of Nashville writers three years ago, embodies this attitude in the Southeast. A similar movement is on foot in the Southwest. The Pacific Coast feels itself to be a unit, as does the central Middle West. The whole country, however, does not fall conveniently into clear-cut sections, so that after considerable study it was decided to choose sixteen cities which might provide paintings and sculpture for a representative exhibition of American art outside New York, the cities to be regarded as centers of districts.

"The response to the Museum's invitation was remarkably enthusiastic, and the selections sent in give evidence of impartial and discriminating judgment. More than 100 paintings and about 20 pieces of sculpture were shown in the Sixteen Cities Exhibition, which continued until January 1, 1934."

A STRIKING YEAR BOOK

● "The Silhouette", a striking year book published by the students and

faculty of the Traphagen School of Fashion, 1680 Broadway, New York City, to commemorate the school's tenth birthday, has recently come off the press. Miss Margaret Wallace, of the Traphagen staff, is the editor of the volume. The cover is a representative piece of work by Miss Ruth Lion, of the class of '33. An unusual photograph of Miss Ethel Traphagen, founder of the school, forms the frontispiece. In this special anniversary edition the history and inception of the school are related, and acknowledgment given to those who co-operated with the founder. Many of Miss Traphagen's students who have made notable successes, are represented in the pages given to greetings and congratulations. Melisse of Lord and Taylor, Gladys Parker of "Flapper Fanny" fame, and Joseph Whitehead, known as Joseph in the firm of Brenner, Joseph and White, are among them.

Listed in the descriptive activities of the school are the functions of the employment bureau and its cooperation with manufacturers, stores and the general trade, as well as with the teaching field and board of education. The winter

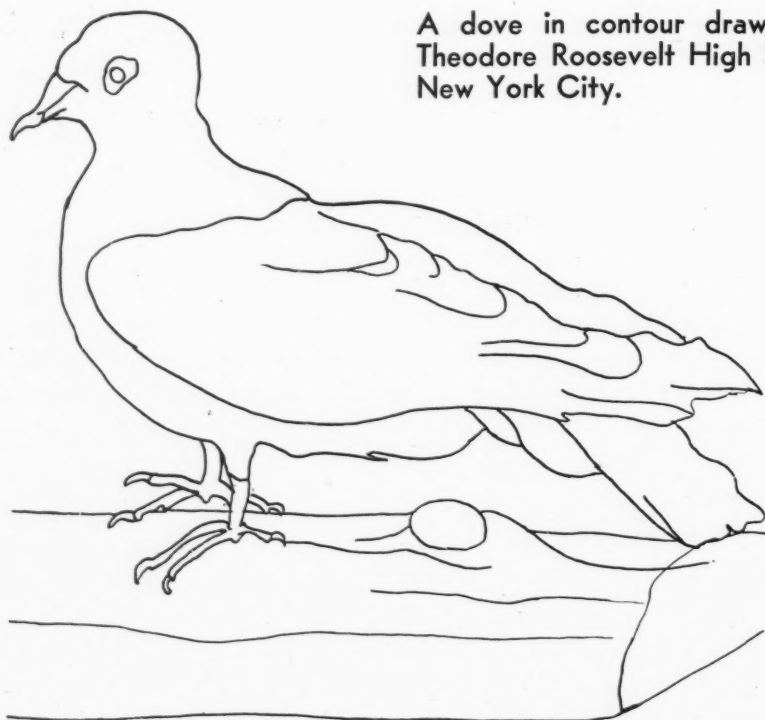


Pierrot by Henry Holmes Smith.

and summer day and evening classes in costume design, millinery, theatrical and industrial design, etc., are represented with illustrations of their work. Outstanding prize-winning students are pictured with their achievements. The practical tie-ups in the students' work with museums, libraries and American manufacturers and department stores are outlined. Methods of research are discussed in civilian as well as theatrical costumes. The school's library of 7500 volumes and its collection of authentic historical costumes make an interesting feature.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt is shown awarding prizes in a contest in which Traphagen pupils won the leading prizes. Other pictures of notables who have been judges are shown with the students, among them Kenneth Murchison, Joseph Freedlander, Arthur Ware and Ernest Peixotte. Ethel Barrymore, costumed as Portia, is pictured in a sixteenth century gown designed by Lucinda Goldsborough, a former pupil of the Traphagen School.

Other pages in the year book discuss the important developments of American art in industry.



A dove in contour drawing from Theodore Roosevelt High School of New York City.



A NEW METHOD OF DESIGNING IN BLACK AND WHITE

By HARRIETT WILSON

Everyone knows the great interest shown in recent years in those forms of art which we have generally named as "black and white". They may be black prints, linoleum prints, pen and ink, or engravings. Now there comes into this modern world governed by the much discussed machine with its ever quickening rhythms many new materials. And among these is a form of illustration board which has a "chalky" surface which with the help of India ink offers the designers an infinite number of possibilities for producing decorations in black and white.

A wash of India ink is laid over this paper which is called "scratchboard" and when it is dry the design is scratched through the black with any sharp pointed instrument, showing the white surface beneath. The difficulty of producing delicate white lines and areas of white against black is easily arrived at with this medium, for the width and direction of engraved line is simply controlled. So that rich surface textures, and markings like those of the old wood cuts naturally

and easily evolve. In working with any medium like this, one in which light is developed against the dark, emphasis should not be in isolated details but rather in the areas and tones and their organization into the unified whole. The parts must never be allowed more importance than the whole. There is much in this way of working which aids and encourages free expression and discourages tightness and wiggling. The dramatics of black areas against the white ones along with the unlimited transitional textures or movements are quickly appreciated and a strength in producing decorative compositions is the result.

Beginners should be encouraged to seek a pleasing balance of tones and areas and to so treat the black masses in juxtaposition to others and in their contours as not to permit them to give a vacancy of feeling.

With this article are shown a few beginning efforts in using scratch board with an idea of giving the novice a suggestion in making his attack. At the heading of this article is a flower panel which, rather

TWO ETHIOPIAN HEADS

By RICHARD TEICHERT

This Ethiopian head at the right by Richard Teichert was done on scratch board by applying the India ink only to the silhouette. By superimposing various tones a three dimensional quality resulted.



In the rectangular composition above, the areas of white were left uncovered by India ink and a pleasing transition from dark to light was achieved by introducing the intermediate tones.

obviously, makes use of line of a rather uniform and decorative type with simple white masses formed by removing all of the black in those places, one might even mount white areas of cut paper to this kind of treatment giving added interest.

In the supplement, opposite page, is a large panel entitled, "The Monk," which was made in line with slight refinements in certain places. This is a style that any student could use. These lines were scratched with the sharp end of a compass—an awl or etcher's tool might work to good advantage. In the case of the head at the top of page, the contour was drawn in and only hat part was covered with India ink. Then the modeling or drawing was added so that the result is a rather pleasing effect of a strong contour against the white of the background. In the Ethiopian girl's head at the bottom of page, the drawing was so studied and planned that the high light areas were left free from black so that much less handling was necessary. And so the student with a creative mind might go on experimenting and producing many most interesting effects, and the professional too who does work for reproduction on the printed page has a wealth of inspiration awaiting him in this style of work.

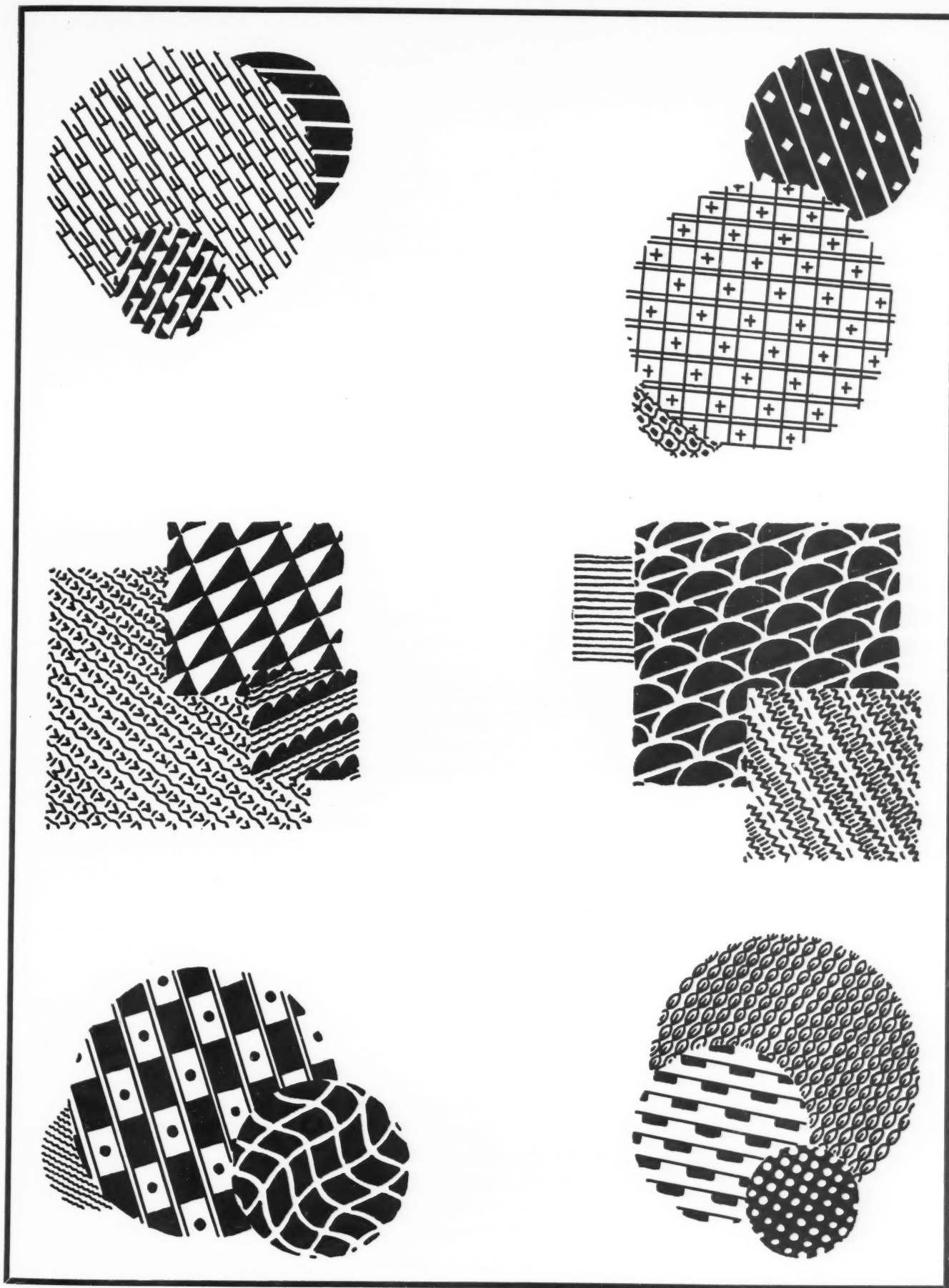
THE
MONK

DESIGN



By
RICHARD
TEICHERT

STATION
11-25



ABSTRACT DECORATIVE UNITS

By HARRY KURTZ

FOR JANUARY

A DIRECT METHOD OF DESIGNING

By CARLTON ATHERTON

A simple means of achieving an all-over pattern and one which is stimulating to the student is shown on pages 17, 18 and 19. In the beginning three or four horizontal bands were combined in a square striving for interesting variety of dark and light. One or two of the edges were broken very simply to give some detail.

A sheet of groups of circles and squares, combined so as to give the maximum amount of variety was then made. The individual circles or squares of each group were textured in such a way as to produce distinct values to differentiate them, one from the other. Almost any good pattern may be used, but the best results are obtained by the simplest means—parallel lines, plaids, polka dots. This seems to develop not only a sense of pattern but also an appreciation of value contrast which is both beneficial and interesting. Many different types of value contrast may be used. For instance, in a group of three circles—one might be light, one medium, and the third dark; or two dark ones might be balanced by one large light one; or vice versa.

Textured circles were used to simulate flowers, combined with straight lines and simple leaf forms in a square. The success of this unit of repetition depends primarily upon good spacing and the arrangement of dark and light. Of those shown here, the two at the right are less interesting in space division than those on the left, as they are both divided through the middle. The upper one can be divided by a vertical line and the lower one by a chevron. In this case it would be an interesting experiment to shift the dividing lines, first making the flower forms dominate in point of size, and then the leaves. Some alteration would have to be made in the dark and light arrangement to compensate the gain or loss of the leaves and flowers as the case might be. Otherwise, the equilibrium would be lost in valuable balance.

Having selected the leaf and flower unit and the banded square, a sheet was laid out in a regular repeat and the units put in alternately, or checker fashion. This process completes an all over pattern very quickly and easily. Much darker flower units might be tried for less contrast, or the reverse of the plate

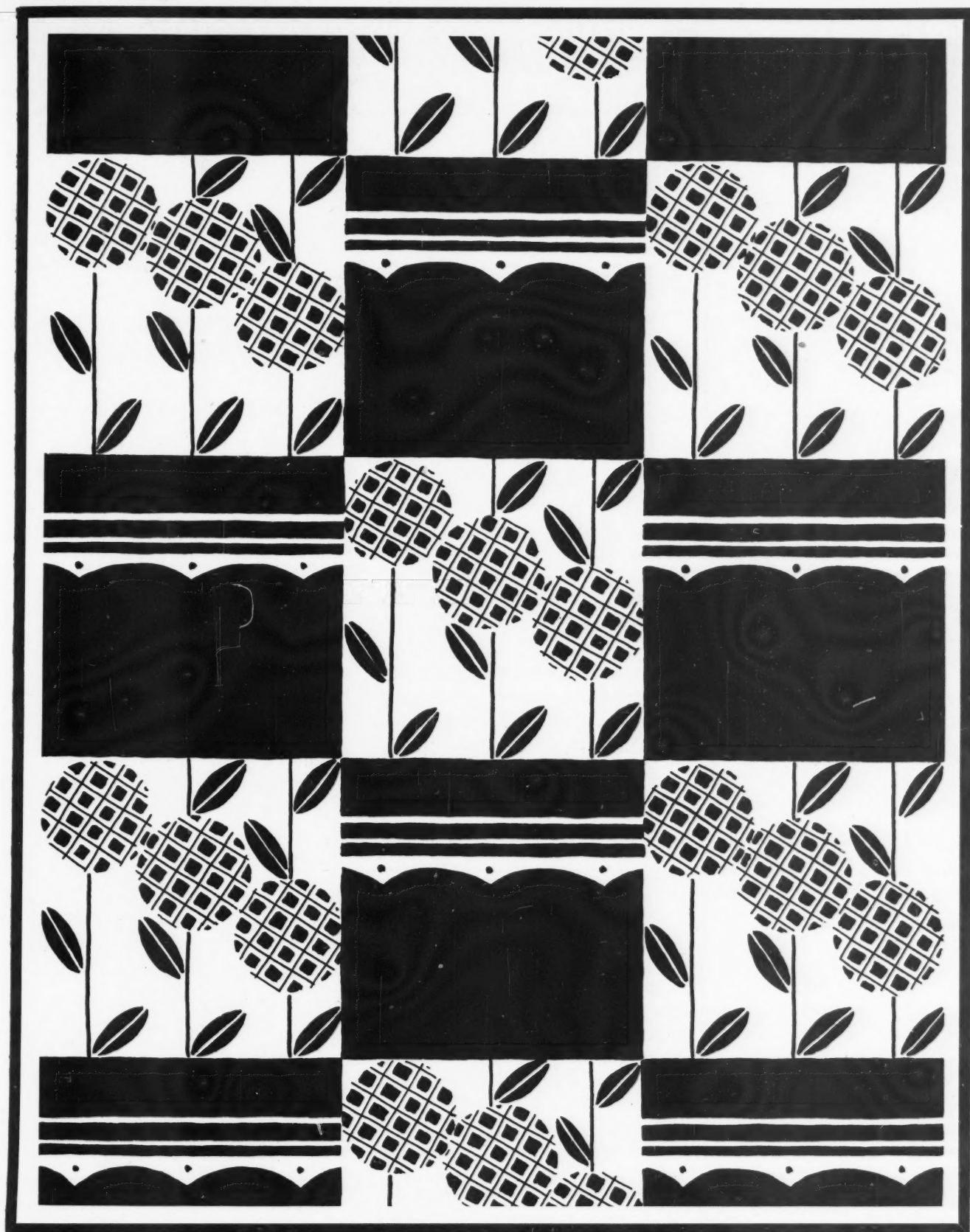
shown here—using very light weight bands with heavy leaves and flowers. The number of effective patterns which can be made by such simple means is endless and will more than repay in satisfaction of achievement for the small amount of effort required. But the greatest value of this project lies in the fact that emphasis is laid upon the creative rather than upon the imitative or derivative side of the designer's art.

These geometric flowers below were used as repeats in building up the all-over design on the opposite page in the class of the author.

TEXTURED UNITS

By MARY DEAN





A MODERN ALL-OVER DESIGN

By MARY DEAN

FOR JANUARY

19

PIONEERS ARE USED AS DECORATIVE SCHEME FOR A HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL

By DOROTHY MILNE RISING

Lumberman decorative panel by Jack Anderson of West High School, Seattle, Wash.

When I learned that "Pioneers" was to be the theme for our 1933 West Seattle High School annual I became thrilled. Such a theme would give unlimited opportunities for research. Not only could all available written data be studied, but there were pioneers living in Seattle who could be interviewed for unpublished reminiscences. As a connecting thread, we would aim to show the relationship between the early pioneers and the students who were preparing to be the pioneers of tomorrow. The linoleum block print seemed to offer the most suitable medium for illustration. In fact, the money saved by printing directly from students' blocks would make it possible to have an annual.

Our most difficult problem would be to harmonize historic elements with those of dark and light composition. It was, in fact, with respect to composition that my students hoped to be pioneers, for they planned to precede the actual annual designing by an intensive study of contemporary art. This was to be studied in relation to art of the past, and analyzed with the view of understanding underlying principles. A survey of high school art courses of study throughout the United States had shown that little use was being made of contemporary art.

The simplicity of present day art, with its dynamic expression, appealed to the students. After becoming interested they soon realized that contemporary art was synthetic, rather than representative. In other words, they noted the fusion of subject matter and structural fitness. That brought us to a detailed analysis of composition.

The value of analysis to high school students is often underestimated, but I found that my pupils delighted in knowing "why" certain things were necessary.

John Dewey says that in order to make creation worth while there must be critical judgment, weighing

A horizontally planned panel making good use of the grouping of buildings by Thelma Hatlemarck.



This rhythmic illustration below suggests the totem pole. It was made by Mary Frye into a rhythm dynamic panel expressive of the subject.

In the book plate below the covered wagon and pioneer youth are used as motifs by Elaine Goemaere who has caught the spirit of his material and expressed his idea very clearly.

The Decorative possibilities of the linoleum block print is shown in the panel below. It was made by the same person and in the same style as the book plate to the left of it.



of values. He refers to the combination as "construction and criticism" and feels that the "intake" is even more valuable than the "output."

Since art is a very broad subject, there can be no formula for judging it. Helen Gardner also states, that although there is bound to be disagreement, it is important that each student knows why he made his particular choice. Therefore he should understand fundamental principles. The principles underlying contemporary art, which helped my pupils, were the following:

1. Emphasis on the creative rather than the imitative function.
2. Structural organization of forms within a given space.
3. Emphasis on substance and volume.
4. Simplified expression of natural qualities.
5. A tendency toward a frank, direct statement typical of the present age.

It is of great value educationally to have students take such problem as contemporary life and these efforts in analyzing contemporary art should help others working on school annuals, and give them great aesthetic satisfaction.

This pleasing initial letter designed by Harriet Rudolph.





HOME LIFE OF THE PIONEERS

A linoleum cut made
by Virginia Pool for
the West Seattle
High School annual.

Is the Creative Worker a Social Problem Today?

Continued from page 13

They are alive, alert and highly conscious of what they are working toward. They want to learn and they are being given the opportunity to learn.

Perhaps the solution of the cultural problem in the United States lies largely in the re-education of public taste. The greatest single force in the development of culture should, and can be, the schools. The average person in the United States today is seldom exposed to culture, nor does he believe in the possibility of a living culture. Only by the greatest flight of fancy could the secondary schools of our country be called a cultural institution. This may seem a fanatical statement, but the average teacher is limited. The average high school principal is not creative minded. The whole educational system seems to emphasize memory training. Except in a few schools little creative work is done. Only in the most progressive schools is this work of a true creative nature. Most wood-working classes work from patterns; art classes copy; poetry classes make rhymes. Such a system stultifies rather than stimulates.

In the school we should have and are developing in

the United States,—the teacher will be a creative worker. He will be paid as experts in other lines of endeavor are paid. The school will be a working school. Our past culture will be background, and only background, for what is to be done. When the schools place the emphasis on creative work, we will have accomplished many things. We will have given the student a conscious aim, an ideal of life that will recognize the need of more than a material existence. As a nation, we will have a new faith in ourselves, for through our planned economy and our new educational system we will have attained balance. Knowing them, we will respect the motives that are the driving power of our lives as individuals. The cultural worker, as a problem, will have disappeared. As the product of our educational system and as one unit of a balanced social system—he will produce.

The temperamental artist will have disappeared. The artist will design for society. There will be no long period of maladjustment. We will be living in reality and see the past in the true light of reality past. "Fine Art" will be the final growth of a solid and sound system. It will be the finest product of each field—but will not be a field in itself.

Motion Pictures Aid Art Education

Continued from page 6

ultimate consumer, and the creative urge or inspiration, cannot be utilized to provide subjects drawing attention to particular aspects of the artistic process, or the final work.

The third division in art education, the Practice of Art, likewise lends itself to many definitions. Rather than go onto the troubling question of what constitutes an artistic act, a simpler analysis will be to segregate three factors usually demanded of the practising artist, whatever his field—Drawing, Design, and Techniques. For each of these, (some ability in graphic expression, some knowledge of effective composition, and technical facility in a given process) films may be of positive value on two scores: to furnish materials and motifs for direct use, and to stimulate creative manipulation.

The Models in Motion have already been shown to be excellent stimulus for drawing. Experiments indicate that the repeated action feature makes of drawing an enthusiastic game, an approach highly conducive to active participation. On the other side, the film, with its power to witness and preserve all visible phenomena, makes available an unlimited supply of reference material for pupils to use in drawing.

Few films have appeared which might be said to directly stimulate the creating of fine compositions. Although commercial productions are constantly improving special arrangement,¹ painters and designers seem to find little in the cinema specifically applicable to the problems of filling an area most adequately. The reason is probably the common disregard of rectangular space limitations as factors influencing the design within the frame, which is so important in painting and other traditional space arts. Nevertheless, the film has the property of revealing design on a surface with all the faculties of photography, plus that of *motion*. The film stands alone in this respect, and only from it can we hope for means whereby to represent effective *kinetic design*.

In teaching the technical processes related to art study, films which would be splendid for the purpose can readily be visualized. They could introduce, describe, and summarize important steps, or give an insight into special techniques or secrets employed. Unfortunately no such films exist. Rather, boring records of what some one happens to be doing at the time, are offered, with little intention of showing the fascinating problems encountered in the course of pursuing one's chosen art. Our only hope at present is apparently in our knowledge of what *can* be done.

Of the above three divisions in art education, appre-

ciation is perhaps the most susceptible of fertile theorizing, and actual experimentation with films. For one thing, every person, however little he may be versed in history or techniques, or however far he may intend to go with his art training, is reached by that the film is destined to have its widest and perhaps most significant applications.

The preceding paragraphs have given a general picture of activities with, and possibilities of, films in art education. The next step is to formulate precisely the two outstanding needs which face workers in this realm. These are unquestionably, a central clearing-house for information, and a comprehensive circulating film library.

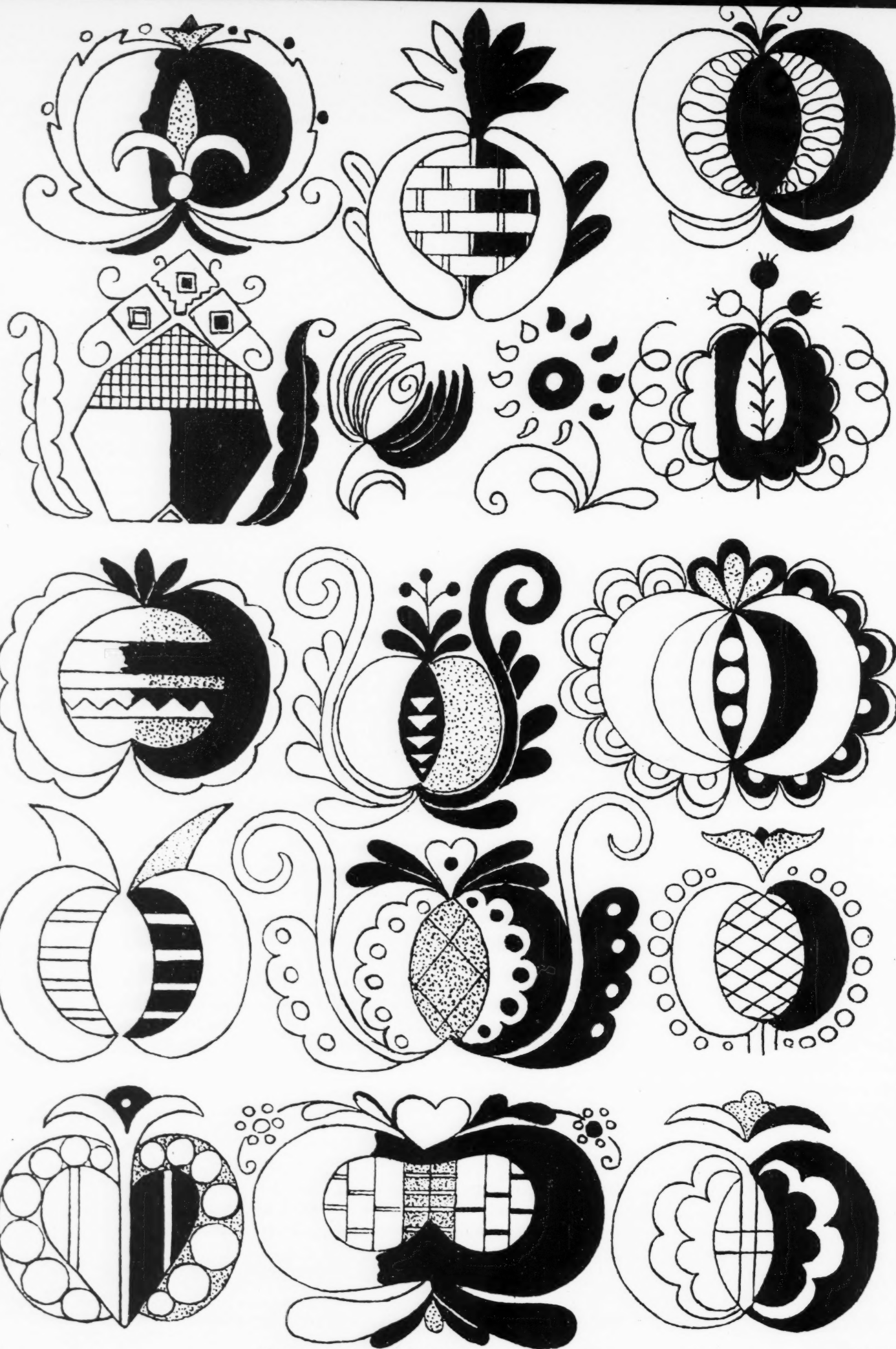
The many advantages to be derived from a centralized collector and dispensor of pertinent information are apparent at a glance. Such important functions as compiling bibliographies,¹ formulating the problems to be solved, actively encouraging research and experiment, and contacting with artists, art teachers and commercial interests directly concerned, are far too complex to be undertaken and satisfactorily pursued by isolated individuals.

Similarly, a comprehensive circulating film library would not only be the focal point of countless reels whose value is now utterly unappreciated, but would also provide the means to purchase the best films being produced for this purpose, thereby generating a definite commercial market. Other activities in connection with a good library might be research into the effect of films on art students, constant efforts to improve upon the quality of existing films, lectures and teacher-training courses in the use of films, screenings of important or unusual pictures for a limited audience, and ultimately, on the basis of experience thus gained, the production of films designed specifically for the student's benefit.

The present essay has throughout consciously insisted on the unbounded potentialities of motion pictures, and has as constantly demonstrated how inevitable it is that they should be successfully employed. Fortified with these essential concepts and the factual data from which they derive, we are better prepared for the next stage in our forward progress. Its direction is clear: *it will come only with organized co-operation in furthering the development of art education courses, and for another, the subject matter is far more comprehensive, since it touches all aspects of art. It is in the field of art appreciation*

¹ Extensive bibliographies on films, film catalogs, and literature appear in the writer's Master's thesis, "Educational Possibilities of Motion Picture Films in Art Courses," School of Education of the College of the City of New York, June, 1933.

¹ An admirable instance is Dreyer's "Joan of Arc."



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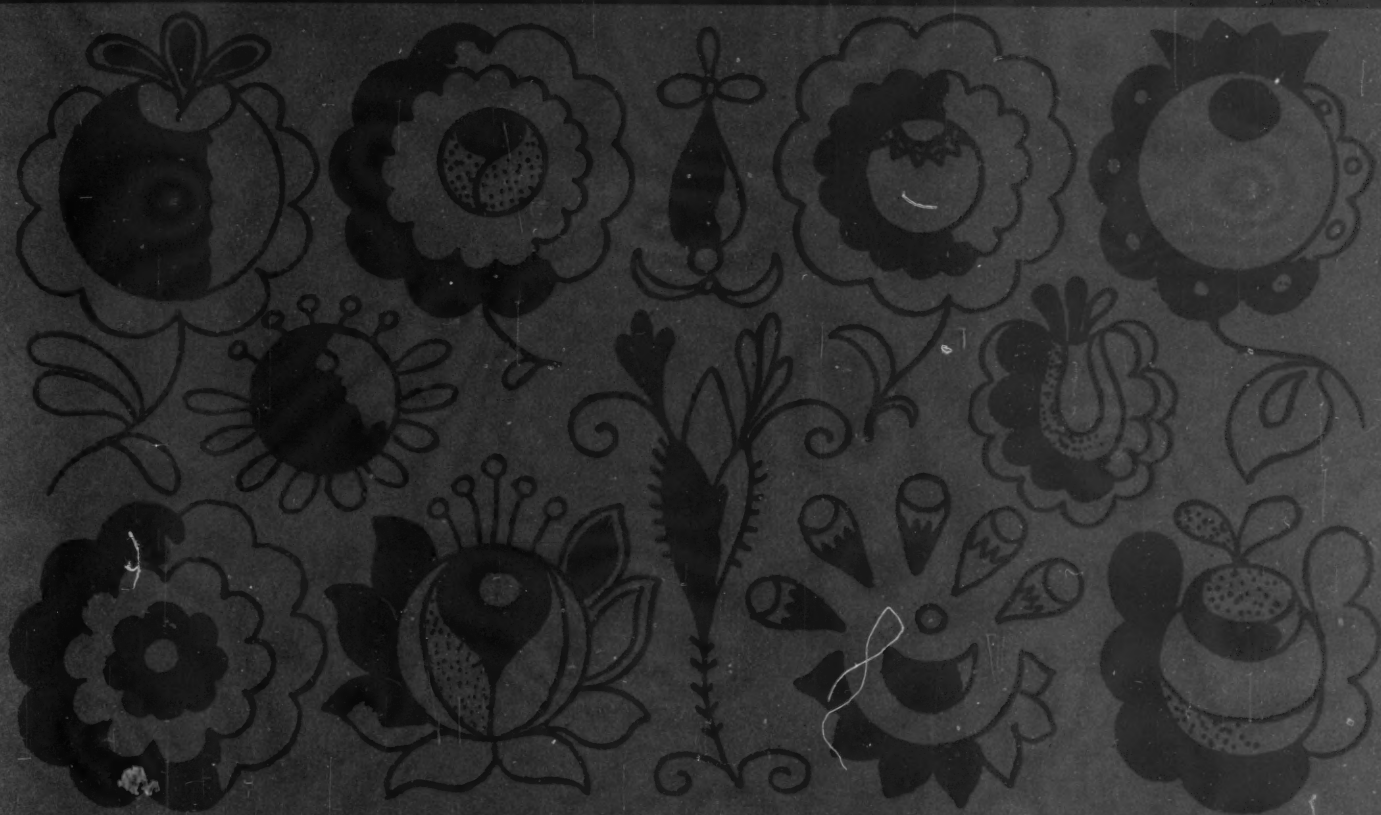
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